CLAIMS

20. A toothbrush of elongate form, comprising bristles, and so designed as to exhibit, on a flat horizontal support, at least one position of stable equilibrium in which the longitudinal direction of the brush is essentially parallel to the support and the bristles lie at a distance from the support and extend toward the support, wherein the position(s) of stable equilibrium is/ are the only position(s) of stable equilibrium of the brush on the support.

21. The brush as claimed in claim 20, wherein there is only one position of stable equilibrium of the brush.

22. The brush as claimed in claim 20, wherein the brush comprises:
   - a distal portion;
   - a proximal portion extending between the bristles and the distal portion in the longitudinal direction; and
   - an intermediate portion between the distal and proximal portions, the brush being so designed that, for any position in which the brush is supported by a flat horizontal support with the longitudinal direction essentially parallel to the support, the distal and proximal portions constitute the portions of contact of the brush with the flat support and the intermediate portion lying at a distance from the support.

23. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the brush is so designed that the proximal portion exhibits a single point of contact with the support in each position of stable equilibrium.

24. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the brush is so designed that, for any position in which the brush is supported by a flat horizontal support with the longitudinal direction essentially parallel to the support, the proximal portion exhibits a single point of contact with the support.

25. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the proximal portion is of a generally flat shape.

26. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the proximal portion is of a generally flat shape in a plane essentially perpendicular to the longitudinal direction of the brush.

27. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the proximal portion is of a generally flat shape in a plane that is essentially inclined with respect to the longitudinal direction of the brush.

28. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the proximal portion is off-center with respect to a central longitudinal axis of the brush.

29. The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the proximal portion projects from a side of the handle opposite another side of the handle supporting the bristles .

30.   The brush as claimed in claim 29, wherein the proximal portion projects from the handle all the way around a longitudinal axis of the brush.

5   31.   The brush as claimed in claim 29, wherein the proximal portion forms with the handle a re-entrant edge on a side of the proximal portion situated toward the bristles.

32.   The brush as claimed in claim 29, wherein the proximal portion forms with the handle a re-entrant edge on a side of the proximal portion situated toward the distal portion.

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33.   The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the proximal portion has an elastomeric outer face.

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34.   The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the brush is so designed that the distal portion exhibits two points of contact with the support in each position of stable equilibrium.

20   35.   The brush as claimed in claim 22, wherein the distal portion has a flat part generally parallel to the longitudinal direction of the brush.

36.   The brush as claimed in claim 20, wherein the brush has the shape illustrated in one of figures 1-5.

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37.   A toothbrush of elongate form and comprising bristles, wherein it is so designed that, when the brush is placed in any initial position on a flat horizontal support, the brush spontaneously adopts a stable position in which the longitudinal direction of the brush is essentially parallel to the support and the bristles lie at a distance from the support and extend toward the support.

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38.   The brush as claimed in claim 37, wherein the brush is so designed that the stable position is always the same, whatever the initial position may be.

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